

March 8, 2012

The Honorable Beth Bye
The Honorable Roberta Willis
The Honorable Toni Boucher
The Honorable Tim LeGeyt

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
Room 1800, Legislative Office Building, Hartford, CT 06106

**Re: Resource for H.B. No. 5221 AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO PROGRAM APPROVAL
FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.**

Honorable members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee:

I apologize that circumstances have prevented us from testifying today, but thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on impact of program approval changes in higher education.

The University of Phoenix opposes HB 5221 as a step backward in maintaining a licensure and approval process for quality academic programs offered by independent institutions that operate in Connecticut.

When the Office of Financial and Academic Affairs for Higher Education (OFAAHE) was created to oversee independent institutions, both non-profit and for-profit, in-state and out-of-state, the continuing expectation was for the OFAAHE to ensure the high standards of academic programs being offered to Connecticut students by all independent institutions. The University of Phoenix has had the privilege of operating in Connecticut since 2005. We believe that academic quality of institutions and the programs they offer is best represented through accreditation and a fundamentally fair regulatory process as opposed to any qualification of tax status. Accordingly, we oppose the bill as drafted and would seek the removal of any references to whether an independent institution is private not-for-profit or a for-profit institution as it relates to program approval.

Here in Connecticut, we have been providing classroom courses since 2005 with over 3,000 alumni in the state, many of whom either took classes at our ground campus in Norwalk or used the education tools we provide at the campus to support their online education, from tutoring and mentorships to career advancement and resume workshops. Our students are 70% female, 60% over the age of 30, and at least 25% minority reporting. The 273 staff and faculty that support our students are 55% female and over 40% minority reporting.

University of Phoenix is constantly innovating to help students balance education and life in a rapidly changing world. Through flexible schedules, challenging courses and interactive learning, students achieve personal and career aspirations without putting their lives on hold. University of Phoenix serves a diverse student population, offering associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs from campuses and learning centers across the U.S. as well as online throughout the world.

Thank you again for a chance to serve as a reference for the committee.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

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